



The American Heartworm Society (AHS) is a nonprofit organization that serves to lead the veterinary profession and the American public in the understanding of heartworm disease. Because of Annie Blumenfeld's efforts promoting heartworm awareness, AHS designated her a "heartworm hero" on our website in 2013.

Heartworm disease is a serious disease that is estimated to affect more than a million pets at any given time in the U.S. Both dogs and cats are at risk, and the disease has been diagnosed in all 50 states. A look at the 2010 incidence map generated by AHS (<http://www.heartwormsociety.org/download/Incidence-Map-2010.pdf>) shows that the state of Connecticut is no exception.

While the disease is treatment in dogs (there is no approved treatment for heartworm infection in cats), it is costly and not without risk. In addition, heartworm infection can cause irreversible damage to the pet's cardiovascular system. At the AHS, we recommend year-round heartworm prevention as well as annual testing. We also support pet-owner education about heartworm disease prevention, knowing that prevention is by far the best alternative. Regardless of where new pet owners get their pets—from a breeder, pet store or shelter—they need to be aware of the need for heartworm prevention, which should start with pets when they are puppies and kittens.